

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 4-6 and 10, cancels claims 1-3, 13, 16 and 19, leaves claims 7-9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, and 21 unchanged, and adds new claims 22 and 23. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 4-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 20-23.

Request for Withdrawal of Finality

With regard to claims 11 and 12, the Examiner did not provide any prior art rejections. We contacted the Examiner to obtain clarification regarding his treatment of those claims. The Examiner indicated that claims 11 and 12 are not allowable, and that he inadvertently failed to provide a rejection for those claims. Therefore, the Examiner recommended that we request the withdrawal of finality of the action in our next response.

In accordance with the Examiner's recommendations, Applicants hereby respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the finality of the Office Action mailed on July 13, 2007.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner allowed claims 7-9, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, and 21, and objected to claims 4-6 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner indicated that claims 4-6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

With regard to claims 4-6, Applicants amended each of claims 4-6 to include all the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, the objection to claims 4-6 is overcome and should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 1-3, 10, 13, 16, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent No. 2000-175019 to Yoshiura et al. ("Yoshiura") in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,020,304 to Alattar et al. ("Alattar"), and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,687,412 to Rao et al. ("Rao"). As previously indicated, Applicants have canceled claims 1-3, 13, 16 and 19. Therefore, this rejection regarding claims 1-3, 13, 16 and 19 is rendered moot.

Regarding the remaining claim 10, the features of the present invention, as now more clearly recited in claim 10, are not taught or suggested by Yoshiura, Alattar or Rao, whether taken individually or in combination with each other in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Amendments were made to claim 10 to more clearly describe features of the present invention. Specifically, amendments were made to claim 10 to include the features of claims 2 and 3, and the allowable features of claim 4. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 10 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 4.

New Claims 22 and 23

Claims 22 and 23 were added to more clearly describe features of the present invention. More specifically, claims 22 and 23 were added to more clearly describe that the present invention is directed to a program embodied on a computer-readable medium as recited, for example, in independent claims 22 and 23.

Claim 22 includes the features of allowable claim 4, and claim 23 includes the features of allowable claim 5. Accordingly, claims 22 and 23 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 4 and 5, respectively.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 4-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 20-23 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 4-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 20-23 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (referencing Attorney Docket No. 501.42779X00).

Respectfully submitted,

MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna K. Mason", is written over a horizontal line.

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